

Utah's Division of Child and Family Services

Eastern Region Report

Qualitative Case Review Findings

**Review Conducted
May 23-26, 2011**

A Report by

The Office of Services Review, Department of Human Services

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I. Introduction

The Eastern Region Qualitative Case Review (QCR) for FY2011 was held the week of May 23-26, 2011. Reviewers were selected from the Office of Services Review, the Division of Child and Family Services, and community partners including individuals from Utah Foster Care Foundation, Utah House of Representatives, Office of Licensing, Ute Tribe, Juvenile Justice Services, and Utah Youth Village.

There were 24 cases randomly selected for the Eastern Region review. The sample included 17 foster care cases and seven in-home cases. All seven of the offices in the region had cases selected, which included Blanding, Castle Dale, Moab, Price, Roosevelt, Ute Tribe, and Vernal. A certified lead reviewer and shadow reviewer were assigned to each case. Information was obtained through in depth interviews with the child (if old enough to participate), his or her parents or other guardians, foster parents (if child was placed in foster care), caseworker, teacher, therapist, other service providers, and others having a significant role in the child's life. Additionally, the child's file, which included prior CPS investigations and other available records, was reviewed.

II. System Strengths

During the Qualitative Case Review process, many strengths were observed and identified regarding the system and case management. At the conclusion of each two-day review period, the reviewers met together for a debriefing session during which a brief summary of each case and the reviewers' observations were presented and discussed with the other reviewers. As part of the debriefing process, each review team was asked to present two or three strengths on their case that had a positive impact on outcomes. The list below is a summarized list of strengths identified by the reviewers. This is not an exhaustive list of all the strengths mentioned during the review process.

Safety

- There was some intimidation at school, but this was dealt with and the children responded to the teacher's efforts to curb the intimidation.

Stability

- The two year old child is still in the placement in which he was initially placed. He has never had to move and has always had the same caregivers.

Permanency

- The children's initial placement was an adoptive home who adopted them. The target child was able to assume the role of a child and not be parentified and feel responsible for his siblings as he had in the past. The siblings were placed together and were adopted into the same home. The family had good informal supports to help with the adoption process.
- The children went directly into placement with a relative after their removal in 2009. They are still placed with the same relative.

Family Connections

- The two year old child in foster care has adjusted well to foster care. He sees his mother often for visits.
- Mother was involved in all of the child's medical appointments throughout the life of the case.
- The father has been resistant to working with DCFS and does not want contact with the child; however, the team keeps him informed of what is going on, sends him copies of court reports, and continues to try to engage him.
- The target child keeps in touch with a younger sibling who lives with his father.
- The child was placed voluntarily with kin with whom he had a relationship.

Engagement

- The worker did a great job engaging with the family.
- The child stated that the caseworker always asks what he needs and wants.
- The family was not satisfied with how they were treated by the judge or JJS, but they felt DCFS treated them with respect.
- There was good engagement between the caseworker and the family. The family trusted the worker.
- There was good engagement with the caseworker and the mother. The worker communicates almost daily with mother. Mother does not trust the agency, but she trusts the caseworker.
- The worker was very engaging. The family loves the caseworker and she is welcome to come to the home at any time, even after the case is closed.
- There was trust between the clients and the agency and open communication.
- The extended family feels respected and listened to. They have been very involved in case planning.

Teaming

- There was a good team that was invested in the child's success. The team was on the same page as a result of routine team meetings and good sharing of information.
- Five child and family team meetings were held in eight months. There was constant communication among team members.
- Team meetings were regularly occurring with nearly all team members present. The caseworker was getting information from the educator outside of team meetings. Team members felt like they had the information they needed to do their part for the family.
- Team meetings were held at critical junctures in the case.
- The family had a large informal support group in the team meetings and they were proactive in calling the meetings.
- The target child had most of the same team members this time he was in care as he had last time he was in care. He had the same worker, same GAL, and same foster family.
- The whole team knew what was going on with the child. The team understood what the child wanted and worked with him.
- The team was a strong support system for the mother.

- The school is now a part of the team. Since the school has been participating in teaming, the children's performance at school has improved.

Assessment

- The team had an excellent understanding of the child's neuropsychological evaluation and underlying needs.
- There was ongoing assessment done throughout the case. The same provider completed the assessments. The CANS assessment was completed periodically. Quarterly progress reports were provided by providers.
- All the team had understanding of the child and family's underlying needs.
- There was good assessing and other issues were identified in addition to the issue that brought the child into care.
- There was good use of informal assessments.

LTV

- There was a good transition plan that bolstered the independent living plan. The child knew what he needed to do to achieve independence.
- As the team gathered information, the LTV continued to develop. It became very individualized and specific to the child's needs.
- The child and team are looking ahead at post high school options such as Job Corp, military, college, etc.

Plan

- The plan was updated and good changes were made to adapt to the child's needs.
- There is a good plan and the family feels like they were part of the planning process.

Intervention Adequacy

- The community mental health provider is involved and good follow-up services are available.
- The child completed life skills classes and got connected to WIA.
- There was an immediate response to the sex abuse issues.
- Parents are beginning to do couples counseling and are more engaged in services. The family is linked with good formal supports such as DCFS, parenting classes, Ute Services, and individual and couples therapists.

Tracking and Adaptation

- There was good tracking and monitoring of the youth. For example, after the youth attended a party, he was drug tested.
- The team adjusted the program to meet the child's need to graduate from high school.
- There was good tracking of drug test results so the parents' progress could be monitored.

III. Stakeholder Observations

Each year the Office of Services Review interviews key community stakeholders such as foster parents, providers, representatives from the legal community, community agencies, and DCFS staff. This year the Qualitative Case Review in the Eastern Region was supported by a total of nine stakeholder interviews. There were six focus groups which included Price/Castle Dale DCFS caseworkers, Price/Castle Dale DCFS supervisors, Price/Castle Dale foster parents, Region Administration Team, Roosevelt/Ute Tribe/Vernal workers, and Roosevelt/Ute Tribe/Vernal supervisors. There were also three individual interviews including a representative from a local mental health provider, a vice principal of a middle school, and a chief of police.

CHANGES OVER THE PAST YEAR

There have been a lot of changes in the region over the past year. The region lost their director in December 2010. At that same time, the region was directed to stop doing all creative intervention cases. Due to these two major changes, there were lots of changes in personnel and job assignments. There is a new regional director. Many caseworkers who had been creative intervention workers were reassigned as in-home or foster care workers. Some were assigned to different offices. Supervisor assignments were changed. Caseloads were redistributed among workers so caseload sizes were more equitable. There have been pros and cons to all the changes. They caused lots of uneasiness and confusion, largely because they were so unexpected. Staff are just beginning to understand the reasons for the changes. The impact of the changes varied from office to office. The offices that were closest to the biggest changes are still fragile and untrusting of administration and the DCFS state office. Offices that were farther away were not as affected and seem to have resumed work without much disruption. There is a sense of unrest in the region as the region collectively is feeling its way along and trying to regain trust in each other and the DCFS state office. They wonder if the decision making process will really change and whether there will be more transparency. Some staff described the region as having been “broken” but now in the process of “healing.” Workers described being made to “feel like dirt,” and they feel like they took the brunt of the blame from both the State Office and the community. However, they are happy that caseloads have been redistributed. They feel that change was long overdue.

STRENGTHS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Transition to Adult Living

The Transition to Adult Living (TAL) program is changing. There is a focus group discussing how the caseloads will be distributed among TAL workers. Having caseloads is new for those who work with TAL. They see more youth getting TAL services and feel there is lots of positive energy around the TAL program. Department of Workforce Services is more involved in the TAL program than they have been. They are working to find ways to provide housing for youth who are emancipating. The TAL workers feel like they have a hard time getting answers when they need them, so they would like to see a TAL specialist in the State Office.

Region Plan and Direction

There has been a conscious effort to change the way decisions are made. The region is beginning to craft a plan for how they will move forward. Information is being gathered to inform decision making. They want to get back to the fundamentals of practice and refocus on Practice Model. The Practice Improvement Team from the State Office is working with them to identify areas of practice to focus on. The QCR gave them a baseline and identified areas for them to focus on. Workers will be retrained in Practice Model. They believe they are headed in the right direction and they want things to work. They feel the offices within the region are working together more now rather than working in isolation.

Foster Parent Cluster Groups

Foster Parent Cluster Groups are meeting monthly in all areas of the region. Attendance is good and foster parents are able to meet the annual requirement for training hours if they regularly attend cluster meetings. Cluster groups are a safe place for foster parents to talk about their needs and concerns and ask questions.

Community Relations in the Vernal Area

There were two community partners interviewed in the Vernal area. Both of these individuals spoke highly of DCFS. They respect the work that CPS workers do. One partner stated that workers are undervalued by the public and the Legislature. He sees too many workers leave because they have no incentive to stay. Both partners had many good things to say about how CPS workers interact with families and the community. They trust the workers' judgment and appreciate their professionalism.

CHALLENGES AND CONCERNS

Centralized Intake

Eastern region consists of small communities who were used to dealing personally with someone they knew when they called in a referral for child abuse. They don't like having to call someone in Salt Lake. Salt Lake office is perceived by the community as a place where referrals get lost. The local communities don't trust Salt Lake; trust will need to be built. Right now the community doesn't feel like they're getting the same high quality of service that they used to get from local intake. The Price office reports that their CPS referrals have gone way down. Law enforcement in the Price/Castle Dale area is especially unhappy about the change. CPS workers in the area are afraid they will be laid off. Workers are concerned cases are not being accepted because they don't have addresses for the homes. Local CPS workers could respond based on directions given by the referent, but Centralized Intake requires an address. Some members of the community won't make a referral now that they can't make it face to face with a local worker. Turnaround time getting referrals through Centralized Intake and back to the region for investigation seems to be slow and could result in loss of evidence. Also, Centralized Intake is not aware of which law enforcement jurisdiction the cases fall into in rural areas. If information is mistakenly sent to the wrong jurisdiction, it can take several days to get it to the right jurisdiction and get the investigation started. On the positive side, they feel Centralized Intake will use the same criteria on all referrals to decide whether or not they should be accepted.

DCFS Relationship with Legal Partners

Relationships between DCFS and the legal partners are quite strained in some areas of the region. DCFS feels the judges bring children into care unnecessarily due to minor delinquency issues or truancy. They feel they are brought into care to assure that they graduate from high school, not because of concerns for their safety at home. Many workers feel they can't please the judge or predict what the judge will do in particular cases. Judges have threatened to hold workers in contempt and send them to jail. Although this has never actually happened to any worker, they see it as a serious and viable threat. It has escalated to the point that a judge issued a warrant for a worker. The region feels some judges don't listen to them, and they wonder who has the power to make a judge change or hold them accountable. DCFS staff also feel that they sometimes get blindsided by the guardian ad litem or assistant attorney general.

State Office

Many staff in the region are frustrated with the State Office. They feel the State Office is unfamiliar with their region and their needs and spends far too little time in their region. They feel they were kept in the dark about concerns the State Office had about Creative Interventions. They also feel they got conflicting direction from the State Office, and then they got chastised by them for doing what they were asked to do. They feel like the relationship with the State Office has recently been changing for the better. The DCFS Director has been to the region several times and both parties are making a concerted effort to improve communication.

Creative Intervention Cases

The region invested for years in developing a Creative Interventions program. They feel being told suddenly to "cease and desist" was demeaning. Staff are confused about why they've been told not to do Creative Intervention cases. They see the State Office encouraging more in-home cases, and Creative Interventions are in-home cases, so they don't understand why Creative Intervention cases are forbidden. They would like to have at least been allowed to keep the pieces of Creative Interventions that they really liked that they thought were working well. They believe Creative Intervention workers went into homes with a purpose.

Foster Homes

The region needs many more foster homes that provide the structured level of care. Many people who are applying to be foster parents are not meeting the requirements. Foster parents need more supports such as a 24-hour crisis line and respite care. There is a lot of dissatisfaction among foster parents right now, and that is making it difficult to recruit new foster parents. Kinship families need help getting Specified Relative Grants so they have the financial resources to meet the needs of the children.

IV. Child Status and System Performance Analysis




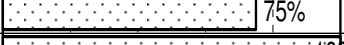

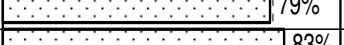

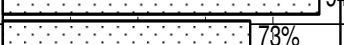
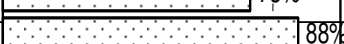

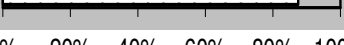
The QCR results are presented in graphic form to help quantify the findings of the qualitative assessment. The graphs of the two broad domains of Child and Family Status and System Performance show the percent of cases in which the key indicators were judged to be “acceptable.” A six-point rating scale is used to determine whether or not an indicator is judged to be acceptable. Reviewers scored each of the cases reviewed using these rating scales. The range of ratings is as follows:

- 1: Completely Unacceptable
- 2: Substantially Unacceptable
- 3: Partially Unacceptable
- 4: Minimally Acceptable
- 5: Substantially Acceptable
- 6: Optimal Status/Performance

Child and Family Status and System Performance are evaluated using 15 key indicators. Charts presenting the overall scores for each domain are presented below. They are followed by graphs showing the distribution of scores for each indicator.

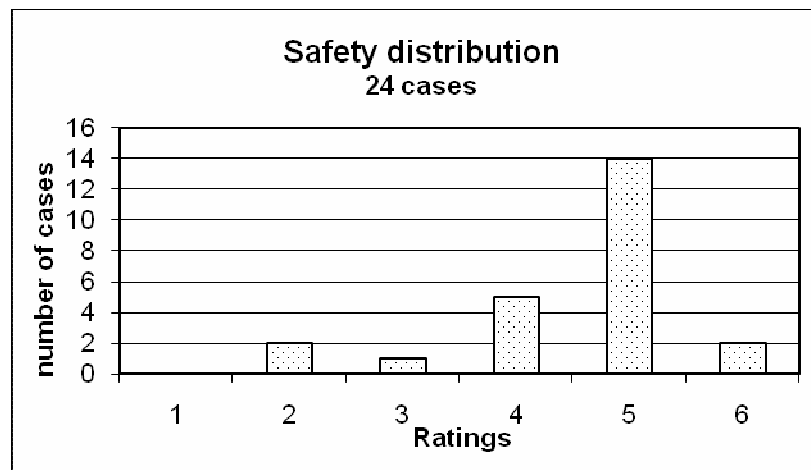
Child and Family Status Indicators

Overall Status

Eastern Child Status									
	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)		FY07	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	
			Standard Criteria 85% on overall score					Current Scores	Trends
Safety	21	3	 88%	96%	100%	100%	88%	88%	
Stability	18	6	 75%	87%	83%	79%	75%	75%	
Approp. of Placement	21	3	 88%	96%	100%	100%	88%	88%	
Prospects for Permanence	18	6	 75%	61%	65%	88%	63%	75%	
Health/Physical Well-being	24	0	 100%	100%	100%	100%	96%	100%	
Em./Beh. Well-being	19	5	 79%	96%	87%	100%	83%	79%	
Learning Progress	20	4	 83%	91%	91%	92%	92%	83%	
Caregiver Functioning	15	1	 94%	94%	100%	100%	100%	94%	
Family Resourcefulness	11	4	 73%	77%	83%	69%	67%	73%	
Satisfaction	21	3	 88%	78%	87%	96%	96%	88%	
Overall Score	21	3	 88%	96%	96%	100%	88%	88%	Above standards
			0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%						

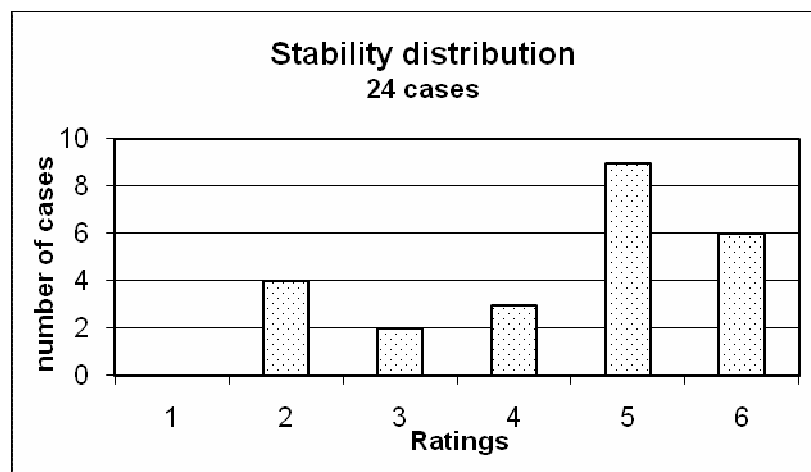
Safety

Findings: The Safety score was 88%, which is identical to last year's score. There were three cases with unacceptable safety scores. All of the cases involved children between the ages of 10 and 13. In one case the child was substantially safe in her foster home, but she was a danger to others because of throwing things and threatening others with a razor. There had also been an incident involving sexual conduct with a peer while she was in a respite home. Another child was found to be unsafe due to the condition of the foster home. This child was removed from the foster home the day after the review. The other child suffered an injury on a bus in a serious altercation with a larger child.



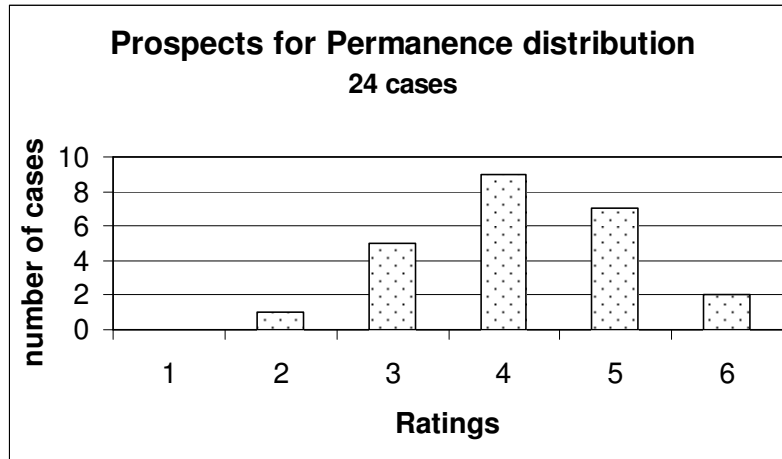
Stability

Findings: The Stability score was also unchanged from last year at 75%.



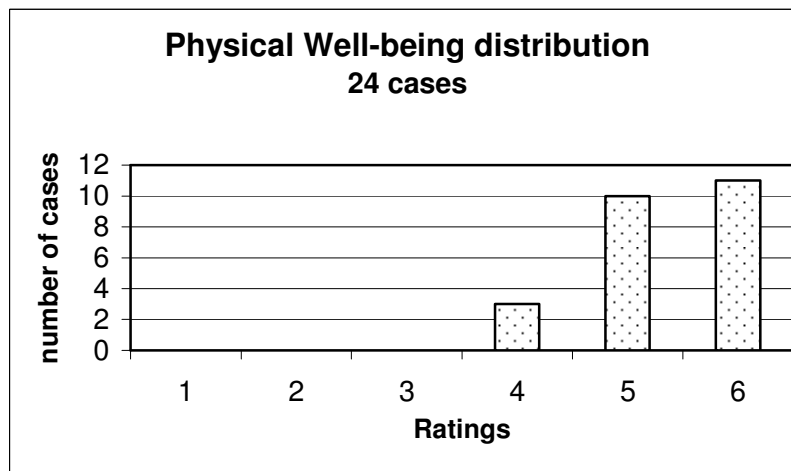
Prospects for Permanence

Findings: Prospects for Permanence rose significantly from 63% last year to 75% this year. This is a challenging indicator for all regions, so this increase is especially commendable.



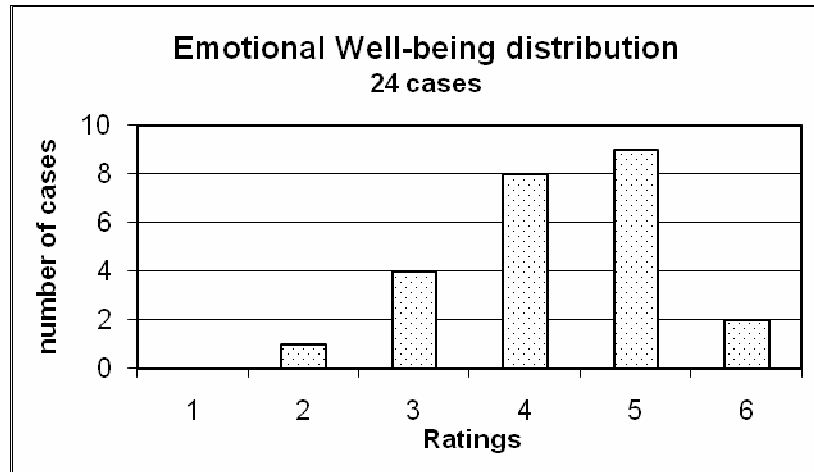
Health/Physical Well-Being

Findings: The score on Health/Physical Well-being was 100%, an increase from 96% last year.



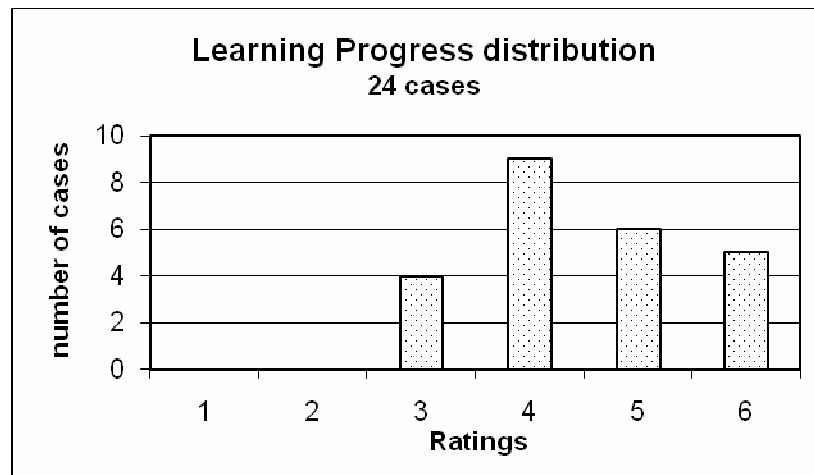
Emotional/Behavioral Well-being

Findings: The Emotional/Behavioral Well-being score decreased slightly from 83% last year to 79% this year.



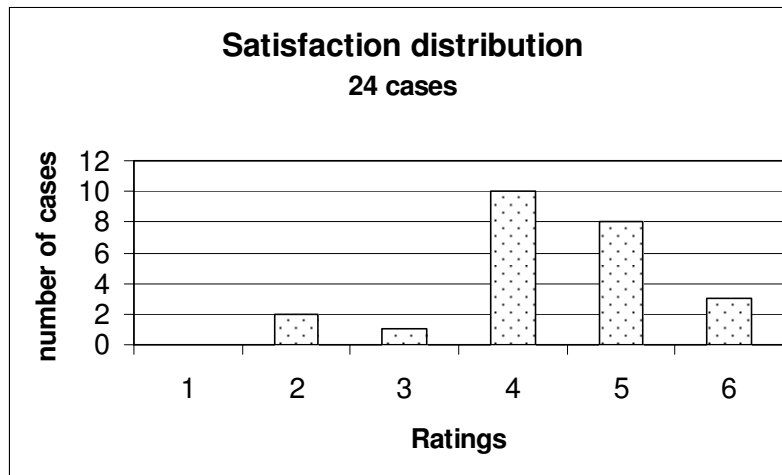
Learning Progress

Findings: Learning Progress declined from 92% last year to 83% this year.



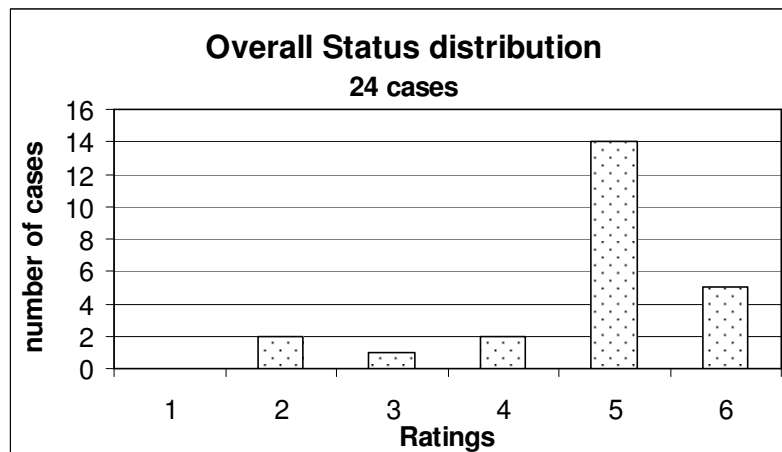
Satisfaction

Findings: Satisfaction declined from an impressive score of 96% last year to 88% this year.















Overall Child Status

Findings: The Overall Child Status Score was identical to last year's score of 88%. This is a direct result of the three cases that had unacceptable scores on Safety. The Safety scores act as a trump, so any case that receives an unacceptable score on Safety also receives an unacceptable score on Overall Child Status.



System Performance Indicators

Overall System

Eastern System Performance										
	# of cases (+)	# of cases ()		FY07	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11		
			Standard Criteria 70% on Shaded indicators					Current		
			Standard Criteria 85% on overall score					Scores	Trends	
C&F Team/Coordination	15	9	 63%	74%	65%	79%	58%	63%	Improved but below standards	
C&F Assessment	19	5	 79%	65%	57%	75%	50%	79%	Above standards	
Long-term View	14	10	 58%	65%	65%	88%	46%	58%	Improved but below standards	
C&F Planning Process	17	7	 71%	83%	87%	83%	63%	71%	Above standards	
Plan Implementation	20	4	 83%	100%	96%	100%	92%	83%	Decreased but above standards	
Tracking & Adaptation	17	7	 71%	78%	78%	88%	79%	71%	Decreased but above standards	
C&F Participation	19	5	 79%	83%	74%	96%	79%	79%		
Formal/Informal Supports	19	5	 79%	96%	96%	100%	92%	79%		
Successful Transitions	18	4	 82%	85%	65%	82%	64%	82%		
Effective Results	20	4	 83%	87%	78%	100%	79%	83%		
Caregiver Support	13	3	 81%	94%	93%	100%	100%	81%		
Overall Score	20	4	 83%	83%	78%	96%	83%	83%	Status Quo and below standard	
			0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%							

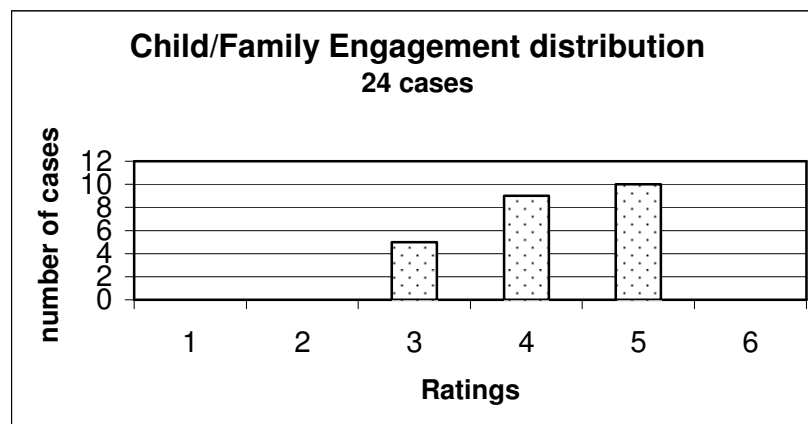
CORE INDICATORS

As with the Child Status indicators, the System Performance indicators are scored from 1 to 6. Each core indicator also has a standard of 70%. The following charts and graphs illustrate how scores are trending on each core indicator. The bar charts show the breakdown of ratings on each indicator, i.e., how many 1's (completely unacceptable), 2's (substantially unacceptable), 3's (partially unacceptable), 4's (minimally acceptable), 5's (substantially acceptable) and 6's (optimal) were scored on each indicator.

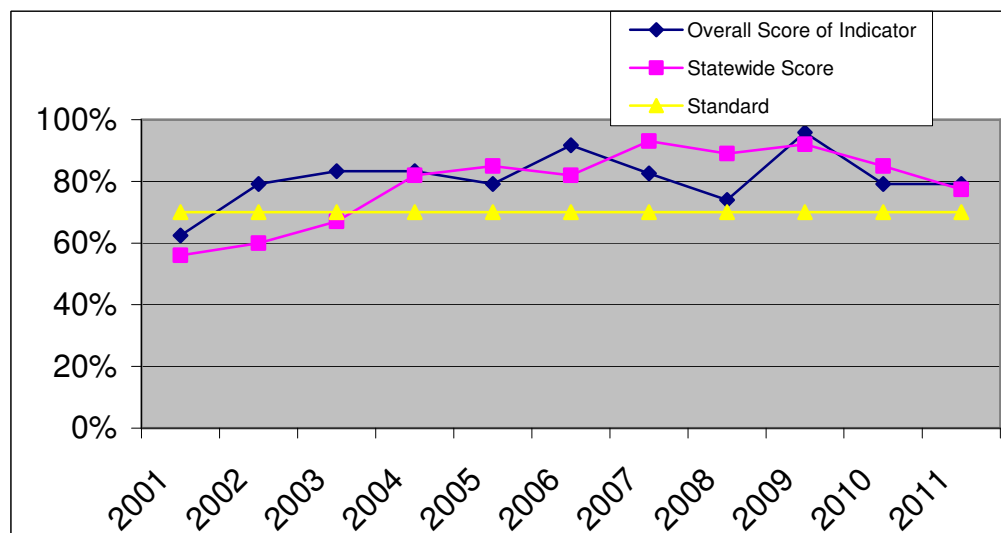
The tables show the region's average score, the region's percentage score, and the statewide percentage score for each core indicator (Engagement, Teaming, Assessment, Long-term View, Child and Family Plan, Intervention Adequacy, and Tracking and Adaptation) over the last 11 years. The line charts illustrate how the region's score on each indicator compares to the statewide score. The straight line represents the 70% standard set for core system performance indicators.

Child and Family Engagement (Child and Family Participation)

Findings: The Engagement score was identical to last year's score at 79%.

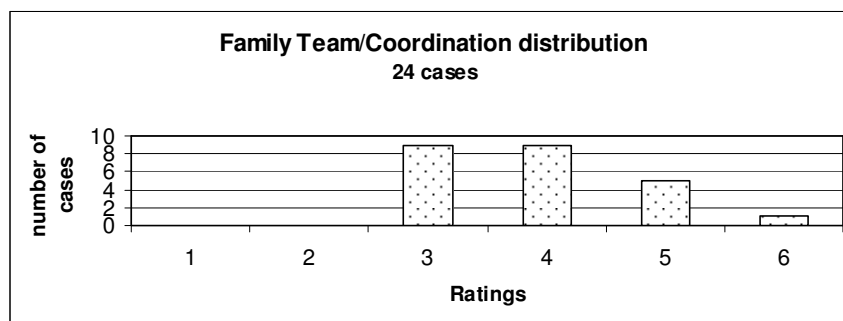


Engagement											
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Average Score of Indicator	4.04	4.00	4.29	4.33	4.58	4.42	4.48	3.92	4.67	4.21	4.21
Overall Score of Indicator	63%	79%	83%	83%	79%	92%	83%	74%	96%	79%	79%
Statewide Score	56%	60%	67%	82%	85%	82%	93%	89%	92%	85%	77%

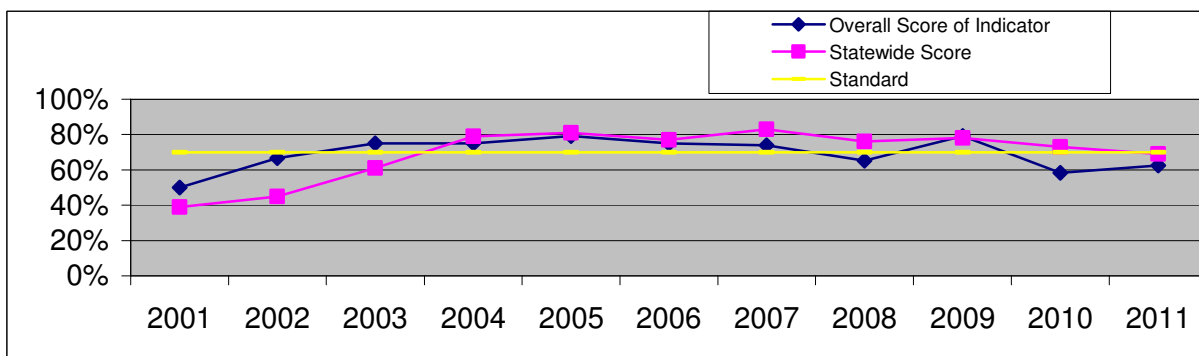


Child and Family Team and Coordination

Findings: Teaming improved from 58% to 63%, which moved it out of the Marked Decline range but left it shy of the 70% standard. Frequency of meetings does not seem to be a reason for below standard scores. Even on the cases that received unacceptable scores, reviewers reported that team meetings were held regularly. It is questionable whether some of the activities described should have been logged as team meetings, since some seemed to be just home visits with only the foster parents or parents and the caseworker. Team meetings held with key members missing was a concern on some of the cases. In case stories reviewers explained how teaming could have been more effective, case progress could have been accelerated, and families could have felt more supported if team meetings had included a parent(s), tribal representative, tracker, teacher, grandparent, nurse, probation officer, therapist, or Department of Workforce Services. Some team meetings also seemed to miss the purpose of teaming. There was mistrust, frustration, or disagreement that wasn't resolved. Some parents felt they had no voice at the meeting, or they thought something had been agreed upon but then the decision was changed or never carried out. Some family members left meetings confused or felt their questions were not answered or important issues weren't discussed. Sometimes parents or foster parents didn't understand the role of professionals who were at the meeting.

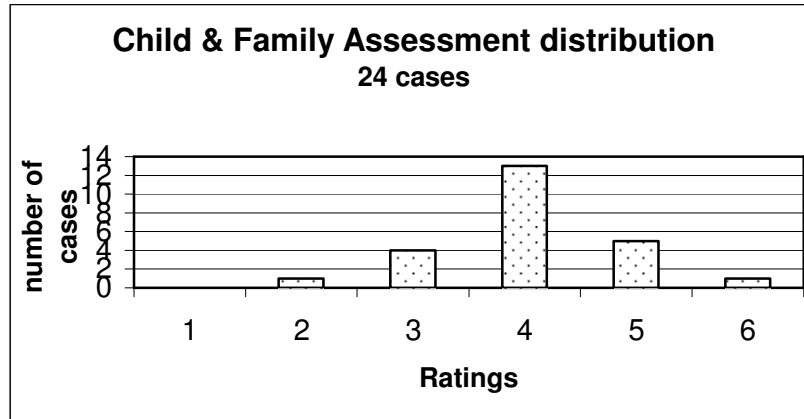


Teaming											
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Average Score of Indicator	3.75	3.83	4.08	4.08	4.21	4.04	4.22	3.91	4.42	3.75	3.92
Overall Score of Indicator	50%	67%	75%	75%	79%	75%	74%	65%	79%	58%	63%
Statewide Score	39%	45%	61%	79%	81%	77%	83%	76%	78%	73%	69%

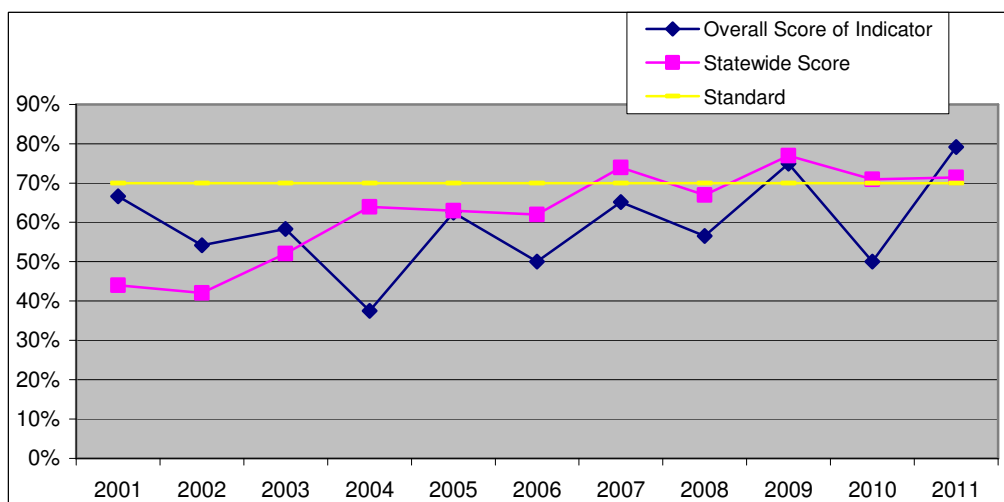


Child and Family Assessment

Findings: There was an outstanding improvement in Assessment, which increased from 50% last year to 79% this year.

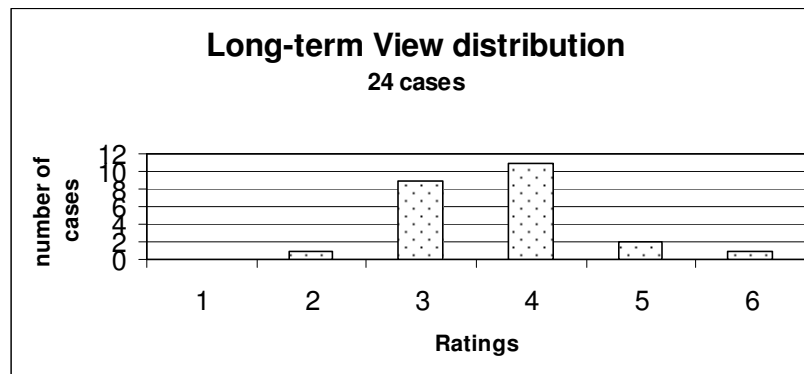


Assessment											
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Average Score of Indicator	3.75	3.58	3.92	3.50	3.75	3.63	3.91	3.74	4.13	3.54	4.04
Overall Score of Indicator	67%	54%	58%	38%	63%	50%	65%	57%	75%	50%	79%
Statewide Score	44%	42%	52%	64%	63%	62%	74%	67%	77%	71%	71%

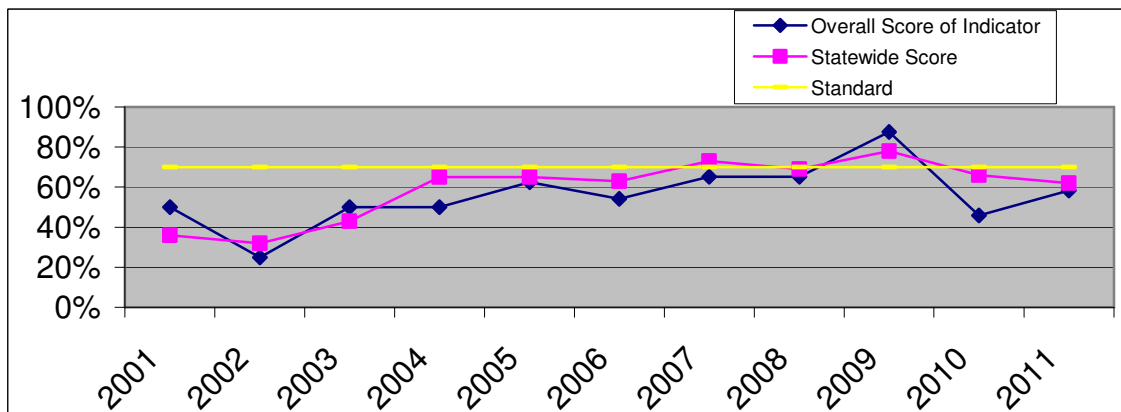


Long-Term View

Findings: The Long-term View score increased significantly from 46% to 58%. Unfortunately, it is below standard and falls in the range of a Marked Decline. There were 10 cases with unacceptable scores on Long-term View. In several of the cases the team could not agree on what permanency might look like for the child or how that could be achieved. For example, the team was unable to agree on a permanency goal or placement. In several other cases the team had agreed on a destination, but had not outlined a path to get there. For example, a family who wanted to adopt didn't know how to proceed or a youth working toward living independently didn't know what steps to follow to obtain employment or housing. In a couple of cases the Long-term View was unrealistic. For example, a child with an adoption goal was not in a placement that could adopt or a child who had serious emotional or behavioral issues that were not being addressed or could not be managed by parents had a goal of reunification.

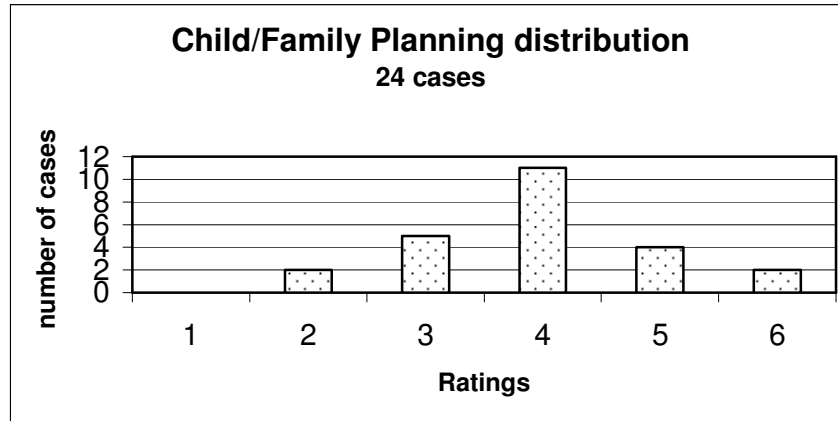


Long-Term View											
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Average Score of Indicator	3.38	2.92	3.50	3.54	3.67	3.63	3.78	3.65	4.17	3.54	3.71
Overall Score of Indicator	50%	25%	50%	50%	63%	54%	65%	65%	88%	46%	58%
Statewide Score	36%	32%	43%	65%	65%	63%	73%	69%	78%	66%	62%

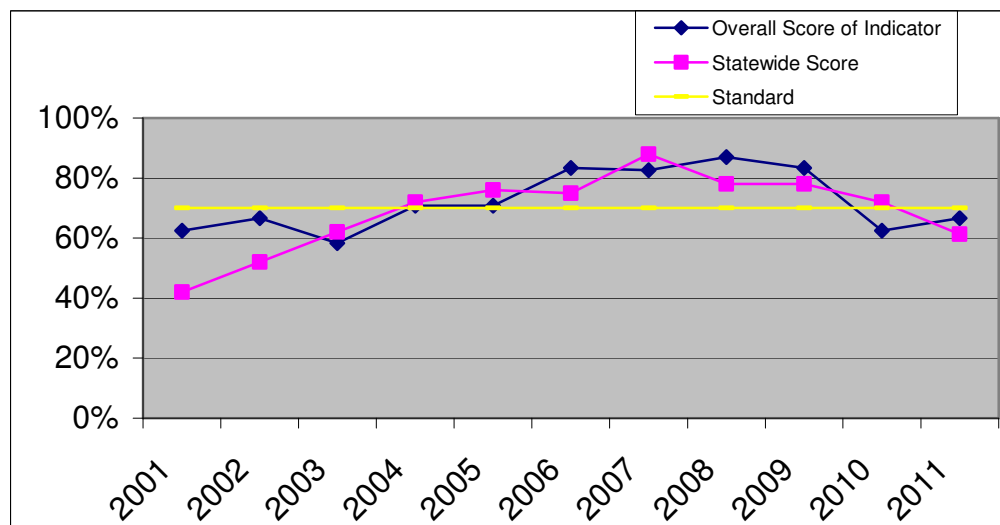


Child and Family Plan

Findings: The Child and Family Plan score increased slightly from 63% last year to 67% this year, which is just slightly below the 70% standard for this indicator.

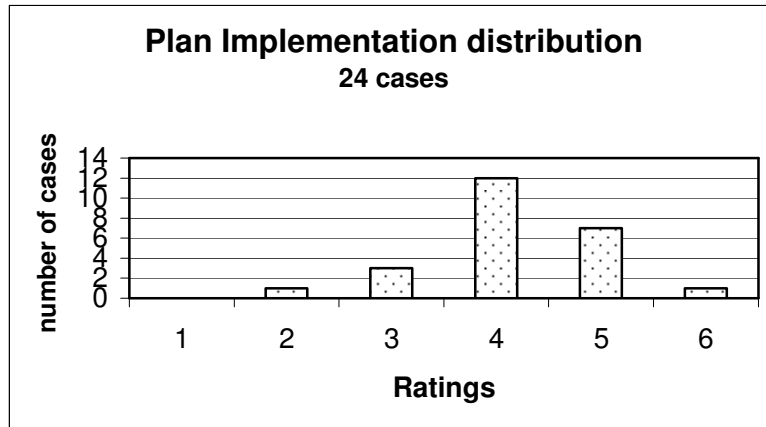


Child and Family Plan											
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Average Score of Indicator	3.92	3.63	3.79	3.83	3.88	4.17	4.22	4.13	4.33	3.71	3.92
Overall Score of Indicator	63%	67%	58%	71%	71%	83%	83%	87%	83%	63%	67%
Statewide Score	42%	52%	62%	72%	76%	75%	88%	78%	78%	72%	61%

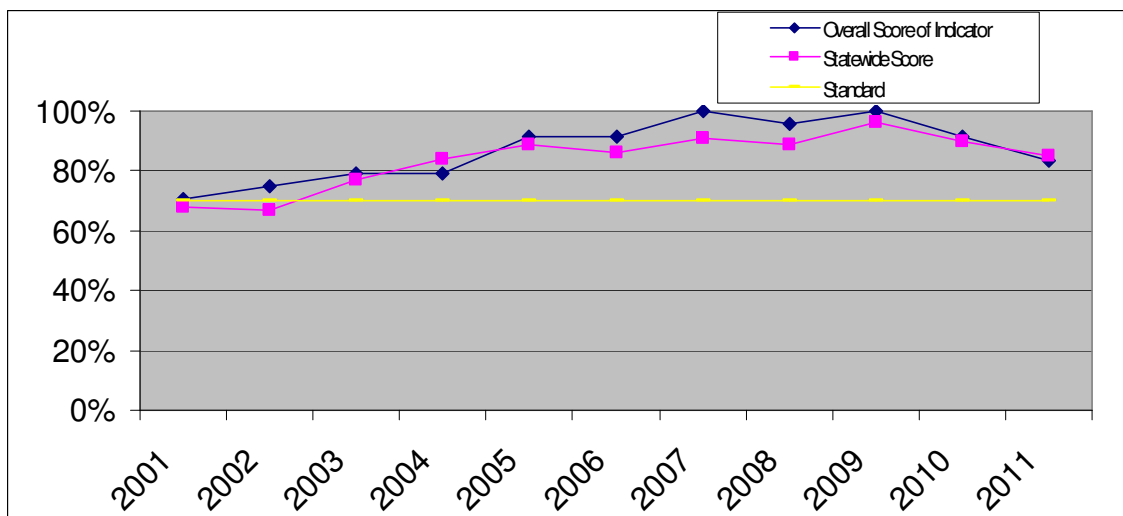


Intervention Adequacy (Plan Implementation)

Findings: Intervention Adequacy fell somewhat from 92% last year to 83% this year. It remained well above the 70% standard.

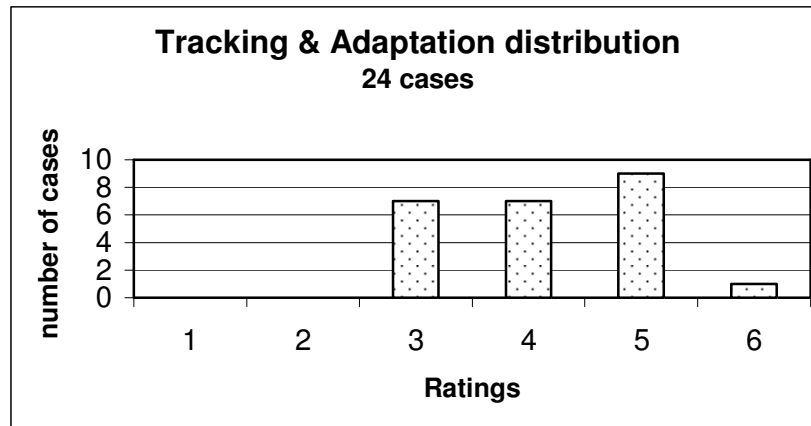


Intervention Adequacy											
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Average Score of Indicator	4.00	3.92	4.13	4.17	4.42	4.42	4.74	4.35	4.75	4.21	4.17
Overall Score of Indicator	71%	75%	79%	79%	92%	92%	100%	96%	100%	92%	83%
Statewide Score	68%	67%	77%	84%	89%	86%	91%	89%	96%	90%	85%

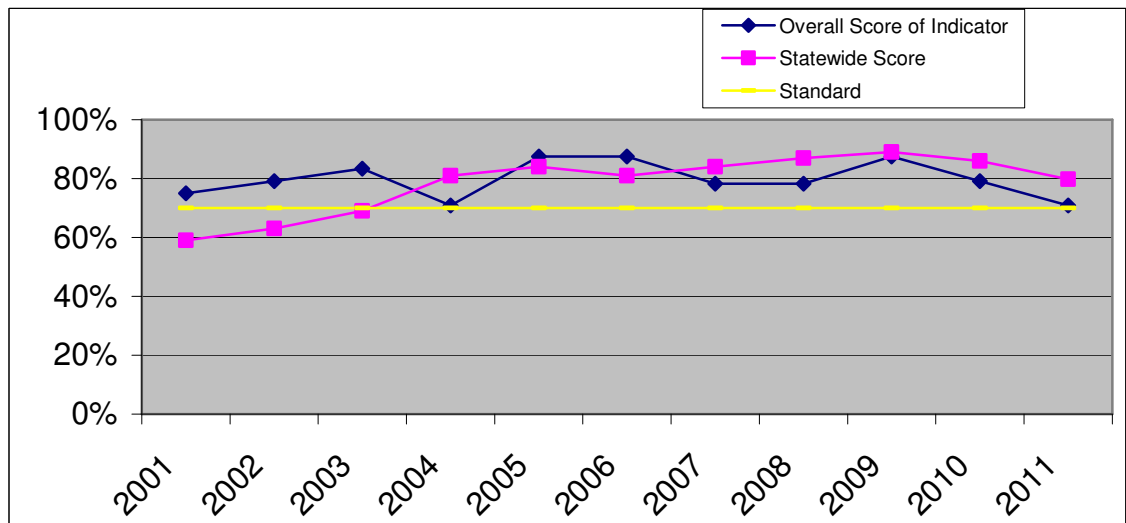


Tracking and Adaptation

Findings: Tracking and Adaptation decreased from 79% to 71% but remained above standard.

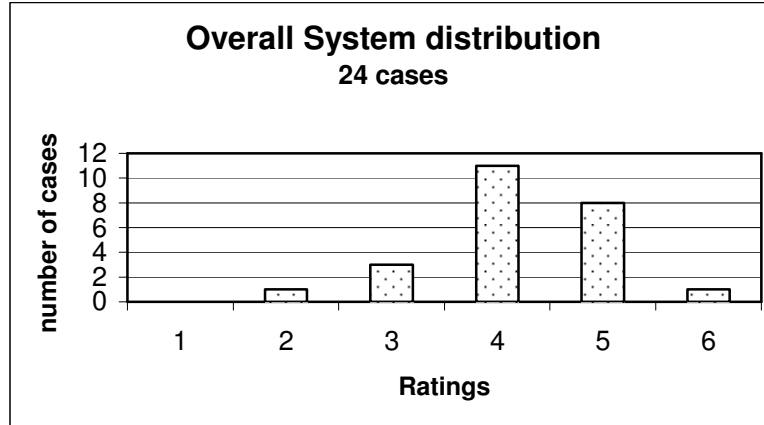


Tracking and Adaptation											
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Average Score of Indicator	4.13	4.21	4.25	4.08	4.42	4.33	4.52	4.26	4.71	4.17	4.17
Overall Score of Indicator	75%	79%	83%	71%	88%	88%	78%	78%	88%	79%	71%
Statewide Score	59%	63%	69%	81%	84%	81%	84%	87%	89%	86%	80%



Overall System Performance

Findings: Overall System Performance was identical to last year at 83%. This is just shy of the 85% standard.



V. Practice Improvement Opportunities

At the conclusion of each two-day review period, the reviewers met together for a debriefing session during which a brief outline of each case and the reviewers' observations were presented and discussed with the other reviewers. Opportunities for practice improvement were identified regarding the system and case management. As part of the debriefing process, each review team was asked to present practice improvement opportunities on their case that could improve case outcomes.

Caseworker

- A new worker was assigned 20 cases within the first two months.

Foster Homes

- The child wished there were more foster homes in the basin so there were some options of who to be placed with.

Stability

- A one year old child was placed in three foster homes, then had a trial home placement, then went back to foster placement, then back home.

Permanency

- The foster family was not willing to proceed to adoption because they would lose services they needed to support the child.
- Adoption needed to be discussed early on with the kinship placement. Now that the child has been there for some time, they are saying they do not want to adopt.

Family Connections

- The target child was not having visits with his siblings.

Engagement

- Engagement with the adoptive family never happened. The adoptive parents felt that they were not included in making decisions and couldn't voice their concerns.
- The mother felt she was not an equal partner on the team. She feels DCFS ran the team and they just told her what to do.

Teaming

- The grandparents would have liked to include more of their informal supports in the teaming process, but they didn't know they could invite who they wanted to attend team meetings. They would have liked to have their daughter be part of the team. The grandfather was afraid to ask any questions for fear that asking too many questions might cause the child to be removed from their home.
- There was a communication break down when the child had a broken nose. He had surgery on the nose, but neither the worker nor the mother knew about it.
- One team member who was not at the team meeting came into court and overrode the decision the rest of the team had made.

- The therapist would have liked to be part of the team and be invited to team meetings.
- On a delinquency case, the guardian ad litem had no information on the case and had never met with the caseworker.
- The team had different ideas about whether therapy had been implemented. The nurse felt that if she had been involved in the team she could have helped set up appointments.
- The teacher wanted to be part of the team. The child was asking questions in school about adoption. It would have helped the teacher deal with this if she had been part of the team.
- There were pressures from the legal partners to remove the child from the home although the rest of the team thought the child should remain at home.
- The therapist was not sharing important information with other team members.
- The caseworker was unaware the child was being bullied at school and doesn't know what the therapist is working on with the mother. The guardian ad litem is new and was not aware of many things on the case. The father would have liked more involvement.
- Although the child has been suspended several times, the school is not on the team. The school counselor said that she has been invited on other cases, but never on this case. She would have liked to be more involved.

Assessment

- After the initial assessment, the assessment process stopped. The team needed to assess why mother was not following through and find a way to meet her needs.
- The team had a difficult time deciding which treatment would be most appropriate. The therapist and the guardian ad litem had differing opinions on what treatment was needed. There were some good assessment pieces done; however, these assessments were not used in decision-making.
- The target child is not adjusting well in school. The school is not assessing the concerns about the child and they do not have a program to meet his needs. There has not been any sharing of information between the school and DCFS.
- There was no formal assessment of the domestic violence situation. For the past nine months they have needed an assessment and it is just now getting done.

Long-term View

- The team members had three possible destinations for the case and had not come to a consensus about which they were going to pursue.
- Team members could not articulate what needed to happen for the kids to be reunited with their mother.

Child and Family Plan

- The plan needed to be updated to reflect the current situation including current treatment, sister's requirements, and supports needed for mother to provide supervision and structure for the child.
- There were different plans to achieve the same goal.
- The plan did not reflect what was going on in the case.
- The plan was auto generated by SAFE. It was very generic and did not address issues such as therapy, etc.

- The plan has very long lists of what to do. The plan was overwhelming and objectives were not prioritized. The plan needed to be specific to this mother. The plan needed to be supportive, not punitive.
- The plan was “updated,” but it was not revised and the content on the plan was not made current.

Intervention Adequacy

- Due to budget cuts, there were troublesome resource concerns with mental health services. The child had to wait five months to get mental health services.
- The youth has been in care for seven months but still is not in a GED approved program.
- There are a lot of formal supports in place; however, informal supports that could be included, such as the sister, have not been involved.
- There was no therapy for the child and it might have helped with his ADHD. There was difficulty getting appointments for therapy.
- There was duplication of efforts with different agencies requiring the parents to do UA’s.
- The caseworker believed the family does not need the relative grant; however, the family said they really need the grant and a Medicaid. They have tried to get them but have not been able to.

Tracking and Adaptation

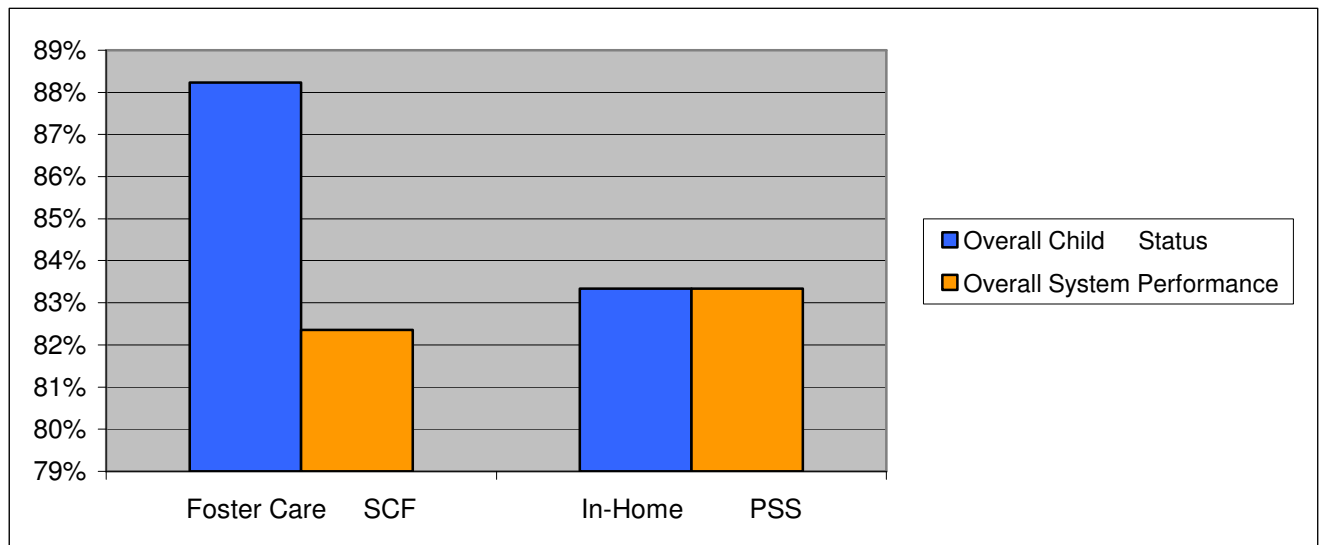
- The previous caseworker did not check to see if the father was attending counseling, even though it was reported in the logs that he attended treatment. The previous caseworker only saw father once in six months.

VI. Analysis of the Data by Demographics

RESULTS BY CASE TYPE

The following table and chart compare how the different case types performed on key child status and system performance indicators. Foster care cases and in-home cases scored similarly on Overall System Performance; however, there were significant differences on how the individual indicators performed. In-home cases performed better on Stability, Prospects for Permanence, and Long-term View. This would be expected due to the fact that the children are at home with the goal of remaining home. The case types scored similarly on Teaming, Assessment and Intervention Adequacy. In-home cases did significantly better on Child and Family Plan and foster cases performed significantly better on Tracking and Adaptation.

Case Type		# in Sample	Safety	Stability	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Engagement	Teaming	Assessment	Long-Term View	Child and Family Plan	Intervention Adequacy	Tracking & Adaptation	Overall System Performance
Foster Care	SCF	17	88%	65%	65%	88%	82%	65%	76%	53%	59%	82%	82%	82%
In-Home	PSS	6	83%	100%	100%	83%	67%	67%	83%	67%	100%	83%	50%	83%
In-Home	PSC	1	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%	100%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%
In-Home	PFP	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

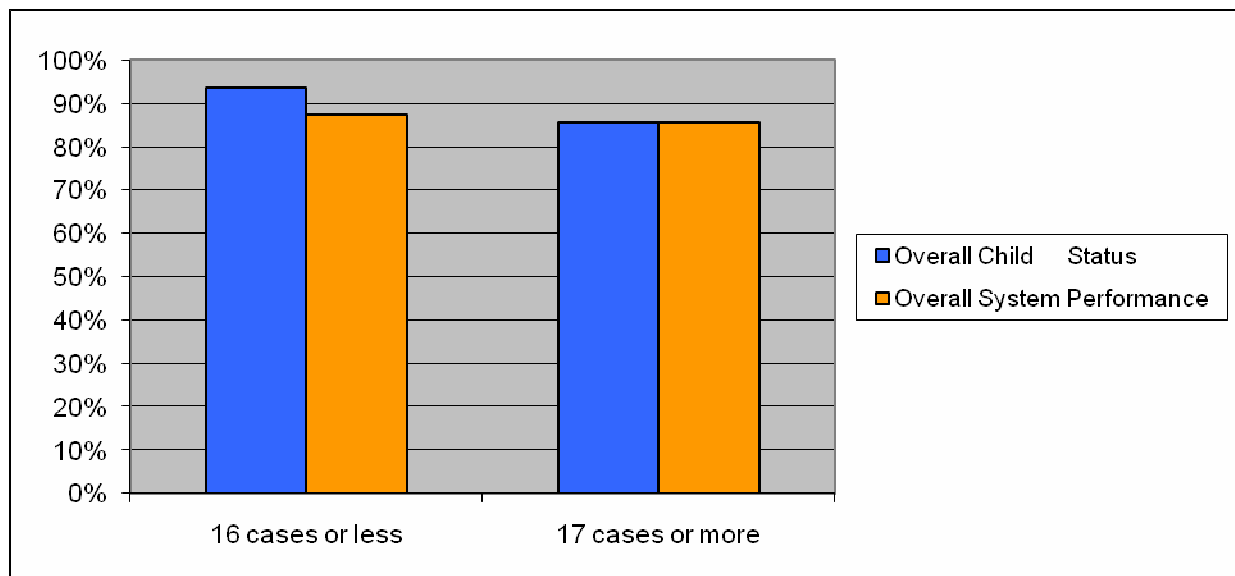


RESULTS BY CASEWORKER DEMOGRAPHICS

Caseload Size

The following table compares how different caseload sizes performed on some key child status and core system performance indicators. Caseloads in the sample were divided into two categories: caseloads of 16 cases or less and caseloads of 17 cases or more. There were 23 workers in the sample rather than 24 because one worker did not provide caseload information. Seven workers (30% of the workers in the sample) had more than 16 cases. Caseworkers performed very similarly on Overall System Performance whether they had the higher or lower caseload.

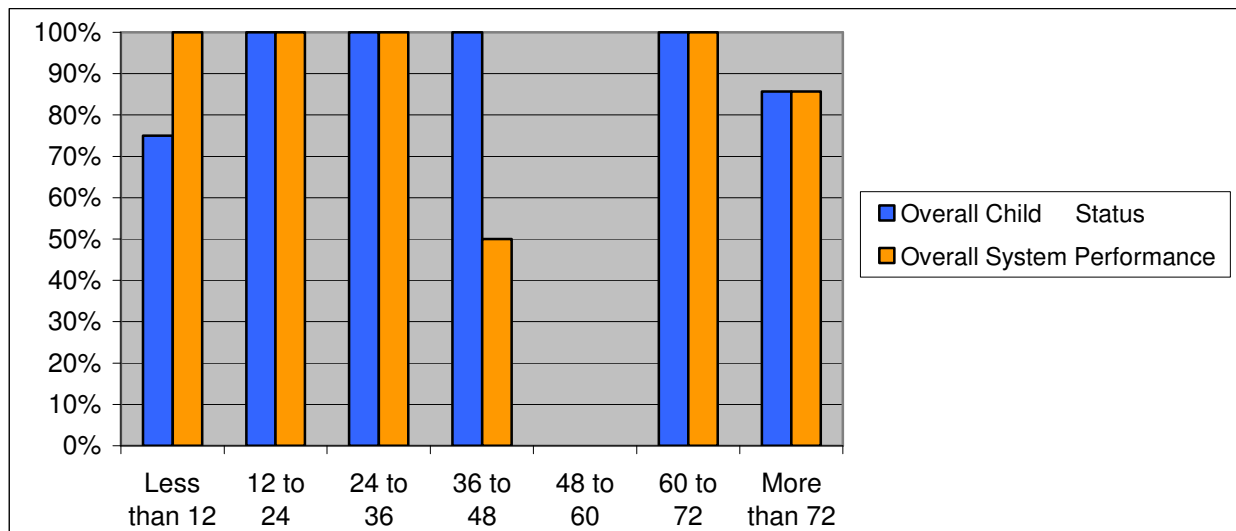
Caseload Size	# in Sample	Safety	Stability	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Engagement	Teaming	Assessment	Long-Term View	Child and Family Plan	Intervention Adequacy	Tracking & Adaptation	Overall System Performance
16 cases or less	16	94%	81%	75%	94%	81%	63%	81%	56%	63%	88%	75%	88%
17 cases or more	7	86%	71%	86%	86%	86%	71%	86%	71%	86%	86%	71%	86%



Caseworker Experience

The following table compares how length of employment as a caseworker impacted performance on child status and core system performance indicators. New worker did not perform as well as most of the experienced workers. Six workers (26%) had less than two years experience. The unpredictable outcomes related to experience suggest that the individual worker's level of performance is more of a factor in determining outcomes than the amount of time they have been employed as a caseworker. Longevity did not equate consistently with improved performance on core System Performance indicators. Various factors, such as new workers tending to have lower caseloads and workers with the most experience often having the most difficult cases, make it difficult to draw definitive conclusions about the effect of caseworker experience on Child Status or System Performance.

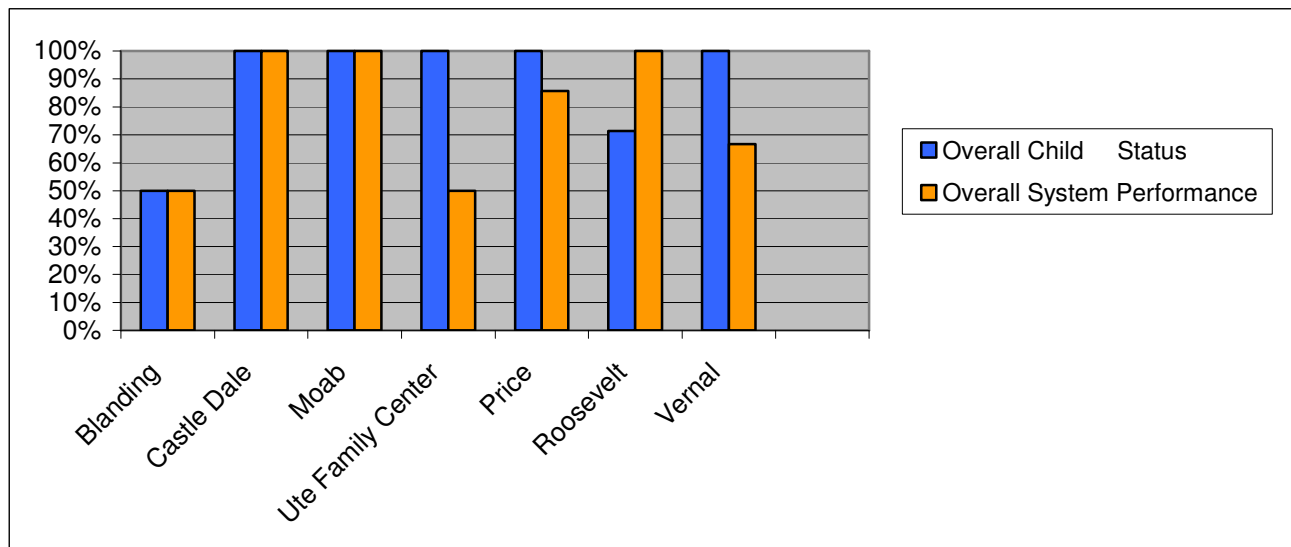
Length of Employment in Current Position	# in Sample	Safety	Stability	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Engagement	Teaming	Assessment	Long-Term View	Child and Family Plan	Intervention Adequacy	Tracking & Adaptation	Overall System Performance
Less than 12 months	4	75%	75%	100%	75%	75%	25%	50%	50%	50%	75%	25%	100%
12 to 24 months	2	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	50%	100%	50%	50%	100%	100%	100%
24 to 36 months	4	100%	75%	50%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	75%	100%	100%
36 to 48 months	4	100%	75%	75%	100%	50%	50%	50%	50%	75%	75%	50%	50%
48 to 60 months	1	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
60 to 72 months	2	100%	50%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	50%	50%	100%	100%	100%
More than 72 months	7	86%	86%	71%	86%	86%	71%	100%	57%	86%	100%	86%	86%



Results by Office

The following table compares how different region offices performed on key Child Status and core System Performance indicators. Cases from all seven offices in the Eastern region were selected as part of the sample. Two offices scored 100% on both Overall Child Status and Overall System Performance (Castle Dale and Moab). Each of these two offices had only one or two cases in the sample. The Blanding, Ute Family Center, and Vernal offices scored below standard on Overall System Performance, but these offices also had small samples where an unacceptable score on just one case would result in a score below standard. The two largest offices with the largest samples both scored well above standard on Overall System Performance.

Office	# in Sample	Safety	Stability	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Engagement	Teaming	Assessment	Long-Term View	Child and Family Plan	Intervention Adequacy	Tracking & Adaptation	Overall System Performance
Blanding	2	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	0%	50%	50%	0%	50%	50%	50%
Castle Dale	1	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%	100%	100%	100%
Moab	2	100%	100%	0%	100%	100%	100%	50%	100%	50%	100%	100%	100%
Ute Family Center	2	100%	0%	50%	100%	50%	50%	50%	50%	100%	50%	50%	50%
Price	7	100%	71%	100%	100%	86%	57%	86%	43%	57%	100%	86%	86%
Roosevelt	7	71%	86%	71%	71%	100%	71%	86%	86%	86%	86%	71%	100%
Vernal	3	100%	100%	100%	100%	33%	67%	67%	33%	100%	100%	33%	67%



VII. Summary and Recommendations

Summary

During the FY2011 Eastern Qualitative Case Review (QCR), numerous strengths were identified around child welfare practice. Opportunities for practice improvement were also identified that could improve and enhance the services being provided by the region.

In regards to the child status indicators, the Region exceeded the 85% standard for Overall Child Status with a score of 88%, which is a reflection of the 88% score achieved on Safety. Five of the 10 child status indicators exceeded 85%. There was significant improvement in Prospects for Permanence.

The System Performance indicators were more problematic for the region, leading to an Overall System Performance score that fell below standard at 83%, which was identical to last year's score. Teaming fell below standard at 63%. Planning and Tracking and Adaptation were both just above standard at 71%. Assessment and Intervention Adequacy both scored well above standard at 79% and 83% respectively. Long-term View had a marked decline with a score of 58%. Four of the core indicators exceeded the standard this year, which is a significant improvement over last year. This is especially commendable given all the changes they have been undergoing.

Recommendations

Although Teaming was not a marked decline, it did fall below standard. Teaming is the foundation of good system performance. Past reviews have shown that improving practice around Teaming results in better outcomes on other core indicators. The region improved their team scoring this year, but it remains below standard. Practice could be strengthened by including all key parties in teaming and focusing on the purpose of teaming. Some teams were meeting, but they weren't able to come to consensus or a different direction was taken after the meeting than was agreed upon at the meeting.

The region also improved their Long-Term View score, but it remains in the range of a marked decline for the second year. In some cases this reflected the lack of consensus by teams who could not agree on a permanency goal or placement. In other cases the team agreed on the destination, but it was either an unrealistic goal or there were not plans in place to achieve the goals.

Eastern region has been through many abrupt and difficult changes over the past six months. They are still in the process of adapting to the changes. They are beginning to regain trust in each other and are determined to work together for a better future. They are pleased with the changes they have seen so far that have led to increased transparency and unity.